



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor
Department of Planning and Development
D. M. Sugimura, Director

**CITY OF SEATTLE
ANALYSIS AND DECISION OF THE DIRECTOR OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Application Numbers : 2208607
Applicant Name: Brittani Ard
Address of Proposal: 2817 14th Avenue West

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED ACTIONS

Master Use Permit for construction of an eight (8) unit, five (5) story apartment building in an Environmentally Critical Area (ECA). Parking for twelve (12) vehicles to be provided within a ground level parking garage. The project includes demolition of an existing duplex. ***

The following approval is required:

SEPA - Environmental Determination
(SMC Chapter 25.05.)

***Project proposal has been reduced to two (2) two-unit townhouse structures with parking for four (4) vehicles within the structures. Future unit-lot subdivision of the subject parcel into four (4) unit lots is proposed under Project #2405208. ***

SEPA DETERMINATIONS: ☐ Exempt ☒ DNS ☐ MDNS ☐ EIS

☐ DNS with conditions

☐ DNS involving non-exempt grading or demolition or
involving another agency with jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND DATA

Site and Vicinity Description

The rectangular site is located on the western slope of Queen Anne, just above 15th Avenue West, a primary route from the north to downtown Seattle. It is zoned Lowrise 3 (L-3) with Neighborhood Commercial (NC3-40) across the alley to the west, and Commercial (C1-40) along 15th Avenue West. Across 14th Avenue West the zoning is Lowrise 1 (L-1), and one block further east it changes to Single Family (SF 5000). The immediate vicinity is comprised of multi-story apartment buildings and single family homes with older, small-scale commercial structures along both sides of 15th Avenue West.

The property has approximately 50 feet of frontage along the western side of 14th Avenue West, and slopes from east to west, changing approximately 20 feet in elevation over its approximately 120-foot depth. The site is located in mapped environmentally critical areas ("ECAs") due to landslide prone soils and to a potential methane gas hazard. The site is almost entirely developed, occupied by a two-story residential structure and generally divided into three level tiers: the upper with the existing residence, front yard and concrete driveway; the middle with lower portions of the residence and the back yard; and a lower gravel parking area with a two-car garage and driveway.

Proposal

The applicant now proposes two (2) two-unit townhomes with parking for four (4) vehicles within buildings. Access to the site is proposed from the abutting alley. The project involves full improvements to the abutting portion of the alley, including a two (2) foot dedication. About 370 cubic yards of soil would be graded, with cuts up to about eight (8) feet in depth. Grading plans may include placement of up to five (5) feet of fill. The site would be re-vegetated at the conclusion of construction. The original proposal was revised in June of 2004, reducing intensity of use and potential impact on the site from an eight (8) unit apartment building with parking for twelve (12) vehicles, and approximately 1538 cubic yards of grading with cuts up to fifteen (15) feet. A future unit-lot subdivision is proposed to subdivide one parcel into four (4) unit lots (Project #2405208).

Public Comment

Public notice of the proposed development was published on June 5, 2003, and the associated public comment period ended on June 18, 2003. One comment letter was received, expressing concerns that street parking is already over-crowded and dangerous, more families will increase traffic and noise, rental properties will diminish property values, and the height of the building would obstruct views now enjoyed by surrounding properties. Concerns have been alleviated as a result of the reduced scope of the project. No further comments have been received.

ANALYSIS - SEPA

The applicant submitted an environmental checklist to DPD on May 27, 2003 (revised August 24, 2004) along with a geotechnical site stability evaluation dated September 24, 2002, and a letter addressing methane hazard mitigation. These documents disclose the project's potential impacts. This analysis and decision are based on the information provided in the checklist and reports, as well as DPD experience with review of similar projects. Short and long-term adverse impacts are anticipated from the proposal.

Section 25.05.908B of the SMC states that the scope of environmental review of actions within environmental critical areas is limited to the following:

1. Documenting whether the proposal is consistent with The City of Seattle regulations for Environmentally Critical Areas, SMC Chapter 25.09; and
2. Evaluating potentially significant impacts on the environmentally critical area resources not adequately addressed in the City of Seattle Environmentally Critical Areas regulations, including any additional mitigation measures needed to protect the ECA in order to achieve consistency with SEPA and other applicable environmental review laws.

The SEPA Overview Policy (SMC 25.05.665.D) states "where City regulations have been adopted to address an environmental impact, it shall be presumed that such regulations are adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation," subject to limitations. Several adopted City codes and/or ordinances provide mitigation for some of the identified impacts. Specifically these are: the Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance (earth, drainage, construction phase impacts); the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Ordinance (grading, site excavation and soil erosion); and the Building Code (construction standards). Compliance with these codes and ordinances will be adequate to achieve sufficient mitigation of identified adverse impacts.

Short-term Impacts

The following temporary or construction-related impacts on the environmentally critical resources are expected: potential soil erosion during grading, and increased runoff. Due to the temporary nature and limited scope of these impacts, they are not considered significant (SMC Section 25.05.794), and should be adequately controlled by the Street Use Ordinance, the Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance, and the Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Ordinance. The future subdivision of property is only for the purpose of allowing sale or lease of the unit lots, therefore there are no short-term impacts and mitigation is not required.

Long-term Impacts

Long-term or use-related impacts are also anticipated from the proposal: increased surface water runoff due to greater site coverage from increased impervious surfaces and loss of vegetation. The expected long-term impacts are typical of low-density multifamily residential development and are expected to be mitigated by the City's Stormwater, Grading and Drainage Control Code

and the Environmentally Critical Areas Ordinance. The future subdivision of property is only for the purpose of allowing sale or lease of the unit lots, therefore there are no long-term impacts and mitigation is not required.

DECISION - SEPA

This decision was made after review by the responsible official on behalf of the lead agency of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the responsible department. This constitutes the Threshold Determination and form. The intent of this declaration is to satisfy the requirement of the State Environmental Policy Act (RCW 43.21.C), including the requirement to inform the public of agency decisions pursuant to SEPA.

- [X] Determination of Non-Significance. This proposal has been determined to not have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).
- [] Determination of Significance. This proposal has or may have a significant adverse impact upon the environment. An EIS is required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(C).

SEPA CONDITIONS

None required.

Signature: _____ Date: September 30, 2004
Dawn E. Bern, Senior Land Use Planner
Land Use Division

DEB:bg

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